A Lesson In Being Gentle

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A Lesson In Being Gentle

by Bordementions

Summary

Meno and his trainer engage in a little lesson to teach Meno to be a little more gentle

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

The stack of papers on your desk felt heavier than it had any right to be, partly because each and every sheet was likely a testament to Fenomeno's uniquely catastrophic brand of helpfulness. You tapped a nail against the topmost report, the crisp sound cutting through the otherwise quiet office.

Across from you, Meno sat rigidly in the visitor's chair, the sturdy oak frame groaning softly under his considerable size and looking more like a doll's accessory than actual furniture. His posture was perfect, back ramrod straight, hands placed firmly on his knees, but the nervous twitch of one of his dark, pointed ears gave away his anxiety.

"Meno," you began, letting out a sigh that was equal parts exasperation and affection. You picked up the first report, waving it gently in the air. "This is from the head of the middle school division. It says here that you 'apprehended and interrogated' a student for… let's see… 'suspiciously rapid consumption of a yakisoba pan'."

Meno's deep violet eyes widened, his gaze sharp and intense as he leaned forward. The movement seemed to shrink the room by half. "Boss! With all due respect, that is a flagrant misrepresentation of the situation! The student was consuming the bread at a speed deemed hazardous to her own well-being! She could have choked! I was merely intervening to ensure proper safety protocols were followed during her lunch break!" His voice, always laced with a booming, official tenor, bounced off the walls of your cozy office.

You suppressed a smile, lowering the paper. "It also says you demanded she 'state her name, year, and class for the official record' and that she burst into tears."

A deep, mortified flush crept up his neck, dusting his sharp cheekbones. His horse ears, which had been perked up in righteous indignation, now flattened against his hat. His tail gave a single, distressed thump against the leg of the chair.

"The… the tears were an unforeseen development," he mumbled, looking down at his large, gloved hands. "My intent was not to cause emotional distress."

"I know, Meno. I know," you said, your voice softening. You tossed the first report onto the 'headache' pile and picked up the next one. "Okay, what about this one? From the groundskeeper. Complaint alleges that you were caught 'shaking down' a cherry blossom tree and yelling 'Cease and desist your unlawful littering!' at it."

“The sakura petals were creating a significant slip-and-fall hazard on the main thoroughfare!” he defended, his voice rising again in a passionate speech. “It was a preemptive measure to ensure the safety of all students and faculty! The… the yelling was to establish authority!”

“You were yelling at a tree, Meno.”

“It was shedding in a non-designated area!” he insisted, though the blush on his face deepened to a lovely shade of crimson. “B-boss, I was only trying to help. In every one of these instances, my objective was to maintain order and provide assistance.”

You leaned back in your chair, the leather creaking in protest. You looked at him, really looked at him. This towering, powerful umamusume, who could probably run through a brick wall without slowing down, looked so utterly lost and dejected. His fiery eyes, usually so full of conviction, were now clouded with a miserable sort of confusion. He truly didn’t understand why his efforts always went so spectacularly wrong. And damn it all if it wasn’t the most endearing thing you’d ever seen.

“I know you were,” you said, your tone gentle. “No one doubts your intentions. But the execution… it needs work.” You gestured to the pile of papers. “We have reports here of you making a first-year faint when you stopped him to point out his shoelace was untied, scaring a flock of pigeons so badly that one of them flew into the dean’s office window, and attempting to personally direct foot traffic in the crowded cafeteria during lunch rush.”

He winced at each new offense listed. “The reports are… thorough.”

“They are,” you confirmed. “And they all say the same thing. You’re too intense. You’re too loud. You’re… well, you’re terrifying, Meno.”

His shoulders slumped, a rare break in his military-straight posture. “I see.” he said, his voice barely above a whisper.

Your heart gave a painful little squeeze. “No. Hey. Don’t say that.” You leaned forward, resting your elbows on the desk and fixing him with a serious look. “Your presence is powerful. Your sense of justice is one of your greatest strengths. We just need to… calibrate it.”

He looked up at you, a flicker of hope in his violet eyes. “What are you suggesting, Boss? A new, more rigorous training regimen? I will comply! I will dedicate two hundred percent of my effort to correcting

these behavioral flaws!"

"Something like that," you said, steepling your fingers under your chin. "We're going to start a new kind of training, just you and I. A couple practical lessons."

His ears perked up instantly. "Practical lessons? Affirmative! I am ready to receive my instructions! What is the subject?"

You let the silence hang in the air for a moment, enjoying the rapt attention he was giving you.

"Our new subject," you said, your voice dropping a bit lower, "is gentleness."

For a moment, Fenomeno just stared, his sharp features frozen as he processed the directive. Then, his entire being seemed to ignite with a newfound purpose. He shot to his feet, the chair scraping loudly against the floor as he stood to his full, imposing height. He slammed a fist over his heart in a makeshift salute.

"Gentleness, got it boss! I swear that as a member of the public discipline committee I—"

"Meno," you cut in, your voice calm but firm, not rising an inch in volume. "First things first, inside voice."

His impassioned speech came to an abrupt, screeching halt. The fiery conviction in his eyes was instantly replaced by a wave of flustered realization. The dark flush returned to his cheeks with a vengeance, and his ears wilted. He slowly, awkwardly, lowered himself back into the chair, which protested with another weary groan.

"...Copy that," he whispered, the word barely audible. "My apologies, Boss. I have already violated the primary directive. I have failed the first test."

"You haven't failed," you murmured, pushing your chair back and rising to your feet. "You've just given us our starting point." You rounded the desk, the soft click of your shoes on the hardwood floor the only sound in the room. He watched your every move, his violet eyes wide and uncertain, like a wild animal unsure if you were approaching with food or a tranq dart.

You stopped directly in front of his chair, forcing him to crane his neck slightly to look up at you. The sheer scale of him was always

breathtaking up close. “Give me your hand.”

He blinked, confused, but he listened promptly. He extended his right hand, holding it out stiffly in the air between you. It was a huge, formidable thing, encased in the thick, white leather of his uniform gloves.

You reached out and took it. Your own hand felt delicate, almost fragile, as you wrapped your fingers around his. The leather was worn and supple from use, but you could feel the immense strength beneath it, the warmth of him seeping through.

“We’re going to do things gently, okay?” you whispered, your voice a soft hum meant only for him. You brought your other hand up to rest on top of his. “Slowly. Calmly. No sudden movements. Are you with me?”

He swallowed hard, his throat bobbing. “A-Affirmative, Boss.”

“Good.” Your thumbs began to stroke the back of his gloved hand, a slow, circling rhythm. “Pay attention to this. To how this feels.” Your fingers found the reinforced hem of the glove at his wrist. Very slowly, you began to work your fingertips underneath the edge, prying the tight leather away from his skin. Meno’s breath hitched, but he remained perfectly still, a statue carved from disciplined tension. “Is this okay, Meno?”

It took him a second to answer, his voice tight. “Yes… Boss. It is….”

You let a small smile touch your lips. Inch by inch, you worked the glove down his hand, the leather making a soft, sighing sound as it released its hold. You peeled it back over his knuckles, then his palm, finally drawing it completely off his long fingers. You let the discarded glove fall to the floor.

His bare hand, now resting in yours, was even larger than you’d imagined. His skin was warm and smooth, his palm broad with calluses dotting the base of his fingers. You laced your fingers with his, your smaller hand almost disappearing in his grasp.

“Now,” you whispered, bringing his hand up slightly between you. “This is the lesson.” You used the thumb of your free hand to trace the lines of his palm, a feather-light touch that seemed to make him shudder. “No force. No pressure. Just… this. Can you feel the difference? Between this, and grabbing someone’s arm to stop them from jaywalking?”

His gaze was locked on your intertwined hands, his expression a mixture of intense concentration and utter bewilderment.

“I… I can,” he breathed. “It is… quiet.”

“Exactly,” you affirmed, your voice dropping even lower as you leaned in a little closer. “It’s quiet. It’s considerate. It’s about making a connection, not issuing a command. That’s what you’re missing. That’s what we’re going to learn. Together.” You gave his hand a soft, gentle squeeze, pretty different to the bone-crushing grip you knew he was capable of when shaking hands. “We’re going to practice some more.”

With those words, you lifted his hand. The movement was slow, deliberate. He instinctively tensed, but you held his gaze, your expression soft and open, offering nothing but trust. You guided his large, warm hand upwards until the back of his fingers brushed against your jawline. Then, you turned your head and pressed your cheek firmly into his palm.

You closed your eyes for a heartbeat, leaning into the touch with a soft sigh. “See?” you whispered.

Fenomeno went utterly rigid. He was a statue, every muscle in his powerful body locked in place. His violet eyes were wide with a sort of horrified panic as he stared at his own hand against your face as if it were a venomous snake he’d been forced to hold. He wasn’t breathing.

You opened your eyes, a gentle smile playing on your lips. “Breathe, Meno,” you murmured, not moving your face from his palm. When he still didn’t react, you gave his hand a tiny nudge with your cheek. “It’s okay. This is the lesson. Go on.”

That little push seemed to break the spell. A shudder ran through him, and he sucked in a ragged breath. His fingers, which had been frozen straight, twitched against your skin. Then, with a slowness that was almost painful to watch, his thumb began to move. It stroked across your cheekbone with the barest hint of pressure, a touch so light you felt the ghost of it more than the touch itself. He was so terrified of hurting you, of applying even an ounce of his actual strength.

As he focused on that one, painstaking movement, his other hand—still gloved—came up, hovering uncertainly in the air near your shoulder as if he had no idea what to do with it. You reached out and caught it, your fingers closing around his leather-clad wrist.

“Let’s get this one, too,” you whispered. His eyes flickered from your face to your hands, watching as you duplicated the process from before, slowly peeling the second glove away. When his other hand was bare, you guided it to your other cheek.

Now he was cupping your face in his hands, his enormous palms bracketing your jaw, his thumbs resting near the corners of your lips. He looked up at you from where he sat, his expression one of pure, unadulterated awe. He was handling you like you were the most fragile piece of porcelain in the world.

“B-boss…” he rasped, his voice thick.

“You’re doing good, Meno,” you affirmed, your own hands coming up to rest on top of his, not to push him away, but to hold him there. “This is good. This is gentle.”

His breathing was starting to change. The initial, shallow gasps of panic were deepening into something heavier, something more attentive. The quiet intimacy of the office, the mingling scents of cologne and perfume, the unprecedented physical contact—it was all getting to him. You could feel a fine tremor starting in his fingers.

“You’re doing so well,” you praised him in a low murmur. “You see? You aren’t scary, Meno. You aren’t dangerous.” You tilted your head, pressing a little more firmly into his palm. “This feels nice. You feel nice.”

You let him go at his own pace, your hands a reassuring weight on his. You watched as his violet eyes, shimmering with gentle emotion, roamed your face, mapping out the features he was not only allowed, but encouraged to touch.

You watched as the terror in his eyes slowly melted away, replaced by a deep, unwavering focus. His touch, once so painstakingly cautious, grew a fraction more confident. His thumbs began to stroke along your jawline in a slow, rhythmic pattern, his gaze fixed on you as if you were the only mission that had ever mattered. The raw emotion shimmering in his eyes—nervousness, yes, but also a burgeoning, brilliant happiness—made your own breath catch.

Slowly, as if being pulled by an invisible string, he began to straighten from his seated position. His hands never left your face, and he rose to his full, towering height with a fluid grace that belied his size. You were forced to tilt your head back, and back, until you were looking almost straight up at him. He stood directly over you, his body

eclipsing the light from the office window, enveloping you in his shadow and the warm, clean scent of his uniform.

His hands slid from your face down to your waist. For a second, he just held you there, his grip secure but incredibly light. "Boss," he whispered, his voice a low, serious rumble. "Please remain still. I am going to... adjust your position."

Before you could even respond, he was lifting you. There was no strain, no effort at all. You were simply weightless, rising into the air as easily as a piece of paper. He was so unbelievably careful, his movements so measured and precise, that a small, amused laugh escaped your lips. He lifted you as if you were a priceless artifact, his brow furrowed in concentration.

He turned and gently set you down on the edge of your desk, your legs dangling over the side. The reports detailing his overbearing nature crinkled softly beneath you. He didn't step back. Instead, he released your waist and took a small step forward, moving into the space between your knees. His hands came up again, this time to rest on the desk on either side of you. He leaned closer, his proximity a palpable heat, his face now nearly level with yours.

He stared at your lips for a long, silent moment, his own parting slightly as he took a shaky breath. His intense focus was back, but this time it was laced with a deep, blushing uncertainty.

"Boss," he began, his voice barely a whisper, forcing you to lean in to hear him. "I... I have a question." He swallowed, his gaze flicking between your eyes and your mouth. "Regarding the... continuation of this practical lesson."

You couldn't help the small, encouraging smile that graced your lips. "Go on, Meno."

"With your express authorization," he stammered, the formal words a flimsy shield for his raw vulnerability. "And only if it does not constitute a violation of our professional dynamic... M-May I have permission to kiss you?"

Your heart did a little flip. He was so earnest, so polite, so completely his wonderful, overthinking self even in a moment like this. You didn't trust yourself to speak, so you simply nodded, your smile widening.

That was all the confirmation he needed. He leaned in the final few inches, his movements still hesitant. His lips met yours with a touch as

soft and reverent as his hands had been on your cheek. It was a kiss of pure discovery—chaste and gentle, yet full of a deeply suppressed warmth that was now finally being allowed to surface. It was tentative, questioning, and you responded by leaning into it, giving him the assurance he sought. The kiss lasted for only a few perfect seconds before he slowly pulled back, his eyes wide and shimmering, his cheeks flushed a brilliant crimson.

He looked at you, searching your face for a verdict on his performance.

You reached up, your fingers tracing the sharp line of his jaw. A genuine, proud smile lit up your face.

"Good job, Meno," you whispered. "Lesson passed."

End Notes

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